

**ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS
AND DEPARTMENTAL RESPONSE**

Recommendation	Action
That the department elect a strategic planning committee	<i>Done and reported.</i>
Undergraduate Studies Committee review the major and honors programs with respect to resources committed to R/W courses.	<p>The Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) recommended a reduced commitment by this department to the first year R/W courses. <i>This will be reflected in the teaching plan for 2003/04 which reduces number of first year sections to 10 from 13 and makes no provision for extra teaching at the first year</i></p> <p>The SPC recommended that the department reduce the number of first year courses required for the degree from two to one. <i>This will be presented to Department Council in the fall and, if approved, submitted to Arts Faculty Council in the fall as an amendment to departmental regulations.</i></p> <p>The SPC recommended that the department consider introducing one large team/taught first year course. <i>Earnest efforts were made to offer one large team taught section for the Fall of 2003 but we encountered problems in obtaining large classroom for that purpose and had to abandon the attempt for the time being.</i></p>
That the Undergraduate Studies Committee review the desirability of introducing a required course in History methods for majors.	The USC and the SPC both concluded that there was no need to introduce a required course in methodology for majors; that "methodology" should be a component of all courses taught by the department.
That the Undergraduate Studies Committee review the role of Distance Education in the overall service of the University.	<p>The SPC recommended that a limit be placed on the number of Distance Education courses and that none be offered at the first and fourth year or at the graduate level.</p> <p><i>Done</i></p>

That the Undergraduate Studies Committee review the role of graduate students and part-time faculty in undergraduate teaching (especially in first-year courses).

The SPC concluded that it is important that tenured and tenure-track faculty assume primary responsibility for first year courses. Graduate students should (as now) be given the opportunity of teaching; that term appointees will be assigned first year courses and that such appointments be made on a priority basis with retirees, postdoctoral fellows, graduate students, former per course (Memorial) students, current ASMs and any other groups.

Graduate students could play an important role in the teaching of a large, team-taught first-year course with primary responsibility resting with tenured or tenure-track faculty. *This would have been done had the planning referred to above for a large first year section been practicable.*

These recommendations have been accepted as guidelines for developing the department's teaching plan. *In the teaching plan for 2003/04 doctoral students will be assigned courses either in their field of competence or at the first year level. Provision has been made for one 8 month position. There will be no other extra teaching assignments.*

That the Undergraduate Studies Committee consider the range, balance and prerequisite requirements of undergraduate courses.

The SPC recommended the maintenance of the "comprehensiveness" of our undergraduate program with a concentration on the core program. This may mean fewer courses in particular areas/disciplines. *The trimming of our curriculum remains a major priority to be undertaken in the academic year 2003/04. This will include new course descriptions, the identification of new fields, the abandonment or modification of some fields, and the dropping of some courses from our curriculum.*

The SPC recommended there should be no prerequisites for any courses up to the third year as this would undermine the viability of such courses.

The SPC also recommended continuing our commitment to interdisciplinary programs with a strong and successful track record - Law and Society, Women's Studies, Canadian Studies, Newfoundland Studies, European Studies, Medieval Studies, the Harlow semester - and more cross-listings with cognate disciplines.

The department has a strong tradition of supporting interdisciplinary programs and has played a major role in several. The department is awaiting the outcome of the current effort to appoint a chair in Aboriginal Studies, an area in which the department, until recently, was well represented, to determine the nature and extent of our relationship with Anthropology.

The department also intends to explore the possibility of co-operation with Language departments in offering courses on history and culture. We have begun to work more closely with Political Science in the area of European Studies but may be able to open up a closer relationship in the Newfoundland field.

That the department consider the possibility of joint undergraduate/graduate seminars.

The SPC concluded that there will be no return to the thesis option for MA students which would mean the return of an undesirable "two-tier" system.

That the department confirm the current MA in the short term but, if pressure for a renewal of the thesis degree arises in the next few years, that program might be reconsidered.

That the University consider the creation of a single, multi-disciplinary unit in the humanities and social sciences (provisionally the Newfoundland Studies Research Institute) for the conduct of research and graduate studies in Atlantic, Newfoundland and Labrador Studies.

That the Department continue the doctoral program in its present form and reconsider the present limits periodically.

That the Department continue the practice of placing doctoral candidates in charge of undergraduate courses, but only after the candidates have completed the comprehensive examinations.

That the University should consider making applications to local SSHRC competitions contingent upon periodic applications to national competitions.

The SPC recommended that such seminars be made available on an *ad hoc basis* when Masters students need an elective more appropriate to their program.

The SPC concluded that there will be no return to the thesis option for MA students which would mean the return of an undesirable “two-tier” system.

This recommendation was considered to be outside the mandate of the SPC although the department in general was in favour of this proposal. *This proposal should be sent on to Arts Academic Planning for its consideration.*

While no action was required on this recommendation the department remains concerned about under-funding of the graduate program, especially at the doctoral level. *At the doctoral level we have been strong in the fields of Women’s History and Labour History. Given the departure of the Kealey’s it is unlikely that we will be able to maintain that reputation. New hirings may well open up other possibilities. In the meantime, our three main areas of strength remain Newfoundland and Labrador, Maritime and Canadian.*

This is currently the case and will continue to be the practice.

This is a matter of university policy. The department does encourage faculty to make such applications. We have in the past been very successful in obtaining strategic grants.

That the Dean of Arts, in consultation with the History Department, undertake to develop a new method of leadership and administration for the Maritime Studies Research Unit.

That the Department seek opportunities for enhancing participation and leadership within the University and in the Community at large.

That the University Administration review departmental space and resource requirements in the department with a view to addressing the concerns raised in this report.

This has been done. A new Chair of the Unit is in place and a new constitution approved. An effort has been made to secure funding for the Unit on a regular basis. The History Department has developed two new courses in Ocean History and made efforts to revitalize the field of Maritime Studies.

The SPC recommended that efforts be made to increase the number of majors and minors. The popularity of thematic courses suggests that more of this type of course should be offered. This will need to be considered in any curriculum review. Incoming history students are not always aware of what constitutes a program in the discipline. It recommended the development of a handbook outlining courses generally offered, faculty profiles and career possibilities. The handbook could be distributed to high schools through the Academic Advising Centre and the Student Recruitment Office. *This will be undertaken in 2003/04.*

The SPC feels that the profile of History as a discipline needs to be conveyed to the community by means of a consistently updated website. *The departmental secretary has been assigned to keep the website up to date.*

This has already been undertaken on an initiative by the Dean of Arts.

The History Society has pressed for space for its own activities. The department has given the Society use of the bibliographic centre on a regular basis for meetings. The Society has also been instrumental in canvassing the student body in support of additional space for Arts Faculty students and has presented a report to the Dean of Arts.

That the University administration respond favourably to the History Department's repeated application for one additional administrative staff member.

The department has made formal application for an additional staff member but has not been successful in this. We have been fortunate in having work term students on a fairly regular rotation through the department. This has helped relieve the situation to a certain extent.

That the Department begin the search for a new head as soon as possible.

Human Resources is currently conducting a review of staffing needs.

This has been done. The report of the Committee on the Headship has been submitted to the Dean of Arts.

Department of History Action Plan 2002-07

1. Review of resources committed to First Year Teaching:

The review of our commitment to first year teaching has already begun. Taking into account reduced faculty complement with possible further reductions over 2002-07 the department has begun scaling back its commitment to the first year. Once the Arts Academic Planning Committee reports on its review of these courses and, providing that other means are implemented to achieve the desired result, the department intends to reduce the degree requirement to one course at the first year level. What has yet to be decided is whether the department will opt for a standard first year course or retain the current six topical courses. This will be decided after the Academic Planning Committee has reported.

The department would like to work with large first year sections, team-taught, and with graduate students employed as teaching assistants for tutorial sessions. This will allow the department to reduce its teaching commitment to first year. This was introduced into our planning for 2003/04 but proved impossible to implement because of a shortage of large classrooms.

2. Major Curriculum Review of Undergraduate Courses

The loss of specializations in the department, changes in degree requirements (Economics), a shift in student interest, new directions within the discipline, among other things, all point to a need for a major revision of our curriculum. At the present time, we have too few 2000 level courses and too many 3000 level courses. We have over a hundred special topics courses on the books, many of which have not been taught since the 1980s. We tried several years ago to clear up the clutter but were informed by the Registrar's Office that this could not be done without affecting student records. There must be some way of accomplishing this, especially for courses that have not been taught for the past ten years.

At one time there was a rationale for our offerings. The first year courses were intended to introduce students to the discipline while offering historical content aimed at preparing students for upper level history courses and providing historical background for other disciplines in the humanities and social sciences. The second year offerings were designed to be surveys of major historical areas/fields such as Ancient, Medieval, European, Canadian, North Atlantic. The third year offerings were designed to allow for specialization within areas/fields. For example, students interested in European history were able to take courses in Newfoundland, American, French, German, Russian, British, history or fields such as Women's, Labour, Economic, Military, etc. The fourth year offerings were designed to provide advanced seminars in the various specializations such as North Atlantic, Canadian, Newfoundland, European, Medieval, Military, Women's etc.

This arrangement goes back to the 1970s and 1980s when History enrollments were high, when the graduate program was small and individual faculty were eager to teach in their specializations. It was also a time when History had a preserved place within the degree and when Education students used History as one of their prospective teaching fields. Much of this has changed. Enrollments have dropped significantly since the mid 1990s; the graduate program has strengthened with more demand for instruction at the Masters level and also at the doctoral level allowing faculty to offer their specializations at an advanced level; and History has lost its preserved place within the curriculum although it continues to enjoy some popularity with Education students.

A number of our major fields have either disappeared with the departure of faculty or no longer attract students. For example, French, German, Russian history have had low enrollments of late. French has not been offered in years. Economic History ceases to draw many students because of changes in the degree regulations for Economics and yet we have four courses in that field. Labour History never got off the ground. The Scientific Revolution has not been offered in years. At the moment we are not able to offer the Women's History courses. The History of Modern Japan and of India have not been offered recently although we do have an Asian specialist. Our offerings in Ancient, Classical Greece and History of Rome, will depend on whether Classics is able to mount these courses in future. North Atlantic history, one of our early specialties, is now offered by distance education and will not be offered on campus because we don't have an instructor. Finally, the fate of our aboriginal/ethnohistory courses depends on whether we can work out something with Anthropology or whether we will try to hire a specialist in this area.

As you can see from the above, the undergraduate curriculum is in need of a major revision. What we are proposing is to begin the process in 2003/04 by asking instructors in each of the areas/fields to re-examine current offerings and to suggest revisions, deletions, restructuring, proposed new offerings. These proposals will be brought forward to our departmental council in the winter semester. We can expect major revisions to curriculum to be forwarded to Faculty Council the following year.

3. Thematic Programs and Specializations at the Graduate Level

Newfoundland and Labrador History, Maritime History and Canadian History are the three principal fields at the doctoral level and reflect the strengths of this department. Within those specializations, Women's History and Labour History have been key attractions in the field of Newfoundland and Labrador History and to a certain extent Canadian History. We no longer have specialists in those fields. Further, our Maritime History was built around several specialists. At the moment only one of our faculty has students at the doctoral level in that field. As our faculty complement changes and as new specializations are brought to this department it is possible that new strengths will emerge that will attract students to the doctoral program.

At the Master's level, we offer specializations in the above fields plus American, African,

British, Irish and European History as well as several other sub specializations such as Medieval, military/naval. Again, new faculty may well bring new specializations and may lead to a growth in undeveloped or under-developed areas.

The strength of our doctoral and masters program reflects the particular research strengths of our faculty. With the possible addition of a large number of new appointments in the next five years there is an opportunity to reinforce existing strengths and also to develop new areas of expertise.